

FRANK G. CARPENTER'S LETTER.

The Army of India

JOHN BULL'S NATIVE SOLDIERS AS A FACTOR
IN THE GREAT UNREST.

How Lord Kitchener Reorganized the Troops—Their Efficiency—Government Factories and Horse Breeding Farms—India's Police Force—Professional Murderers, Poisoners and Baby Killers—A Look at the Jails and Their Convict Labor—The Courts and Their Native Justices.

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CALCUTTA, India, Aug. 20.—The troubles in India continue. All is quiet upon the surface, but every now and then a bomb is thrown, a conspiracy unearthed that shows the volcano beneath. Since I have been here the anarchistic organizations have made attempts upon the lives of many officials, trains have been wrecked and the most barbarous plots unearthed. Several bombs have been thrown at the viceroy, and no high official is safe. In the main the natives are quiet, but the unrest seems increasing and any international complication in which Great Britain takes part may precipitate trouble.

On my way here to Calcutta I traveled with Gen. Pole-Carew, a well known British officer. In speaking of the army, he said:

"Our Indian troops will be loyal enough as long as England is in the ascendency and her power in the far east predominant. If we should have trouble with any other nation, such as Russia, for instance, and should meet with defeat, there would be a danger that the Indian army would fly to the worship of the rising sun. As it is now we hold India because it is a continent of many nations rather than one. The peoples are such that they cannot combine. The members of the various castes hate one another. The races will not mix and the religious sects, if left alone, would fight to the death. It is in this fact that our safety lies. Build another general whom I met here at Calcutta:

"If the British rule were removed for a week, India would be anarchy. The Mohammedans would sweep down on the Hindus, and the Gorkhas would loot and massacre the towns of Bengal. The only salvation for India is in the strong power at the head, and we manage our army by keeping the castes and sects in such divisions that they cannot combine. We learned that during the Sepoy rebellion and shall never forget it."

The Soldiers' Loyalty.
I am told that the agitators are do-

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"I should like to see the British leave India. If they did I would take half a dozen regiments, and within three weeks there would not be a two anna bit left on the plains of the Ganges. We would loot the Bengalees and capture their women. I tell you it would be sport."

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John Bull held upon India is the wonder of colonial governments. He has here a combination of the most turbulent and most peaceful peoples on earth. If they did I would take half a dozen regiments, and within three weeks there would not be a two anna bit left on the plains of the Ganges. We would loot the Bengalees and capture their women. I tell you it would be sport."

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troops in Burma and a garrison at Aden, Arabia. The army, all told, would be small, even if the country were homogeneous and peaceful. It is nothing in comparison with the great forces which are forming in Europe and in the far east. If India had as many soldiers as Japan has on a peace footing its army would number three millions, and if on a war footing it would be more than twelve millions. The Germans have 1 percent of their whole population under arms, and in times of war they could put 5 percent of it into the field. At the same ratio India could have 15 millions under arms in the great wars of the future, and the only power that might possibly surpass her in numbers would be the Chinese, who at the same rate could muster, perhaps, five millions more.

Lord Kitchener and the Army.

The Indian army was made over by Lord Kitchener. I met him about a year ago here at Calcutta, when he was in charge of the troops. He speaks highly of the soldiers as a fighting force and says they are loyal to the government, although attempts have been made to corrupt them. Lord Kitchener when he came to India about eight years ago found three armies, each confined to one part of the country. He consolidated the transport and mail divisions, made nine divisions, each of which had its own general and staff. These were organized for war and each could take the field intact, leaving enough troops behind to maintain order. Every division had its own transport and supply arrangements, and the divisional generals had great authority. At the same time additional officers were appointed and a military college instituted to supply officers. Lord Kitchener reorganized the cavalry and infantry as well as the other departments, and it was during his administration that the army proper was divided from the department of military supplies.

Military Supplies.

This last department has now its own secretary, and it is one of the great business institutions of the government. It deals with army contracts, the manufacture of clothing and ordnance, the transportation of animals and food, and various other things. It has factories for making boots and clothing for the soldiers, factories for making harness and also large establishments for the manufacture of field guns, shells and armament of various kinds. It has camel and cattle farms, and it supplies mules and horses and other animals for transport. There are several camel corps, and there are also mule and horse corps. The camels are given lands free on condition that they hold a certain number of camels available for military service. This department has also to do with elephants, some of which are used for dragging the great guns through the jungles and over the roads. In coming long distances both elephants and guns are transported by railroad.

The Chief Breeding Farms.

The chief breeding farms for horses, mules and donkeys are situated in certain selected districts in northern India and the Deccan. The system is to purchase young stock and rear them on the government farms. Horses for the cavalry are also imported from Australia, and stallions from Arabia for the improvement of the native stock.

The Army as an Asset.

The officers here tell me that the army is the best paying asset in India. The British soldiers are paid more than the natives. It is kept up without taxing the people at home, and it gives him a big fighting force which he can shift to any part of the world upon order. He used it against the Boers, and also in China at the time of the Boxer rebellion. In case of an Asiatic war of any description it would be invaluable to him, and upon the whole it makes India worth far more than it costs. This is especially true of the British soldiers. The total expenses of the military supplies and of the soldiers. The cost amounts to something like \$100,000,000 a year, but this is all raised by the taxation of the Hindus.

The Army is not extravagantly kept from a western standpoint. The native soldiers receive something like two or three dollars per month, which is good pay for the part of the world. Moreover, those who remain in the service for a fixed length of time are retired on a pension of 5 cents a day, and, therefore, can luxuriate for the rest of their lives.

The Police Force.

In addition to the army, India has a large civil police. Every town has its local watchmen, and every city is patrolled by police with clubs in their hands. The local village police aggregate something like 700,000 men, and this would be hardly enough to give one to each village. In addition there are thousands in the cities and on the whole order is fairly well kept. The thugs and other castes, who, in times past made a business of robbing, murdering and stealing, have been wiped out but there are still armed gangs who now and then go about committing robbery and house breaking.

The system of police work is excellent. The watchmen are under the eyes of the head men of their villages, and important crimes are reported to the districts, and in many cases the watchmen are responsible for losses or thefts.

Professional Murderers.

Upon such lists are the descendants of the thugs and members of the other castes, who formerly made crime a business. There are many of these. The Kurus maras are professional thieves and pickpockets. They teach their children to steal and lie out of it. The burglarize houses not through the doors or windows but by digging

through the mud walls with instruments made for the purpose.

The thugs have almost disappeared, having been hunted down by the police like wild beasts. They were a caste or band of hereditary assassins who first strangled and then robbed their victims. They had made of this country with murder stations marked upon them at which places one could kill with least danger of discovery. They killed by wholesale. In one of the trials a certain thug confessed that he had been engaged to 300 murders.

The road prisoners of today are said to be the descendants of or allied to the thugs. They work in small gangs, poisoning the pilgrims and travelers and using poison that they may be able to rob and make their escape. One of the most common drugs is nuxvomica, and another is the native datura, which produces insensibility to pain and death. The latter comes from a plant common all over this country. It is one of the famous poisons of ancient India, which kills without trace. One of the most noted poisoners of recent times used this drug. He was a policeman, who had learned the trade in jail. At his trial he confessed that he had poisoned hundreds of people, and he gave the details of 69 murders.

Poisoning has always flourished in India. The legends of the gods are full of the custom, and love charms and death charms may still be bought. The tanners used to poison cattle for the sake of their hides by placing arsenic behind their troughs, and within recent times an attempt was made to poison an army official with diamond dust mixed with arsenic. There are traditions of princes and princesses who have been poisoned by envenomed robes like that of Nessus.

Baby Killers.

Until very recently one of the most common crimes in India has been infanticide. It is still practiced in some localities, being most prevalent at the times of famines. Such infants are usually girls. Many of the Hindus look upon the birth of a female child as a curse, and at a census taken not long ago it was shown that of the girls under 12 years of age of certain castes, about 40 in every 1000 were missing. This would mean the killing of four girls in a hundred, a large percentage indeed.

Among the Rajputs of northern India the surplus female children were once destroyed at birth, and I am told that this custom still occurs now. In and about Benares there is a tradition that if a girl baby be drowned in milk it may come into the family next year as a baby boy. Such beliefs made infanticide one of the many parts of India until the British administration took hold. One authority relates that in some of the tribes of Oudh not more than one in 20 of the baby girls were allowed to live, and many castes and tribes threw their surplus of children into wells or tied them to trees, where their eyes were picked out by the crows. In the upper Ganges valley the chief breeding farms for horses, mules and donkeys are situated in certain selected districts in northern India and the Deccan. The system is to purchase young stock and rear them on the government farms. Horses for the cavalry are also imported from Australia, and stallions from Arabia for the improvement of the native stock.

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The thugs have almost disappeared, having been hunted down by the police like wild beasts. They were a caste or band of hereditary assassins who first strangled and then robbed their victims. They had made of this country with murder stations marked upon them at which places one could kill with least danger of discovery. They killed by wholesale. In one of the trials a certain thug confessed that he had been engaged to 300 murders.

The road prisoners of today are said to be the descendants of or allied to the thugs. They work in small gangs, poisoning the pilgrims and travelers and using poison that they may be able to rob and make their escape. One of the most common drugs is nuxvomica, and another is the native datura, which produces insensibility to pain and death. The latter comes from a plant common all over this country. It is one of the famous poisons of ancient India, which kills without trace. One of the most noted poisoners of recent times used this drug. He was a policeman, who had learned the trade in jail. At his trial he confessed that he had poisoned hundreds of people, and he gave the details of 69 murders.

Poisoning has always flourished in India. The legends of the gods are full of the custom, and love charms and death charms may still be bought. The tanners used to poison cattle for the sake of their hides by placing arsenic behind their troughs, and within recent times an attempt was made to poison an army official with diamond dust mixed with arsenic. There are traditions of princes and princesses who have been poisoned by envenomed robes like that of Nessus.

Baby Killers.

Until very recently one of the most common crimes in India has been infanticide. It is still practiced in some localities, being most prevalent at the times of famines. Such infants are usually girls. Many of the Hindus look upon the birth of a female child as a curse, and at a census taken not long ago it was shown that of the girls under 12 years of age of certain castes, about 40 in every 1000 were missing. This would mean the killing of four girls in a hundred, a large percentage indeed.

Among the Rajputs of northern India the surplus female children were once destroyed at birth, and I am told that this custom still occurs now. In and about Benares there is a tradition that if a girl baby be drowned in milk it may come into the family next year as a baby boy. Such beliefs made infanticide one of the many parts of India until the British administration took hold. One authority relates that in some of the tribes of Oudh not more than one in 20 of the baby girls were allowed to live, and many castes and tribes threw their surplus of children into wells or tied them to trees, where their eyes were picked out by the crows. In the upper Ganges valley the chief breeding farms for horses, mules and donkeys are situated in certain selected districts in northern India and the Deccan. The system is to purchase young stock and rear them on the government farms. Horses for the cavalry are also imported from Australia, and stallions from Arabia for the improvement of the native stock.

The officers here tell me that the army is the best paying asset in India. The British soldiers are paid more than the natives. It is kept up without taxing the people at home, and it gives him a big fighting force which he can shift to any part of the world upon order. He used it against the Boers, and also in China at the time of the Boxer rebellion. In case of an Asiatic war of any description it would be invaluable to him, and upon the whole it makes India worth far more than it costs. This is especially true of the British soldiers. The total expenses of the military supplies and of the soldiers. The cost amounts to something like \$100,000,000 a year, but this is all raised by the taxation of the Hindus.

The Army is not extravagantly kept from a western standpoint. The native soldiers receive something like two or three dollars per month, which is good pay for the part of the world. Moreover, those who remain in the service for a fixed length of time are retired on a pension of 5 cents a day, and, therefore, can luxuriate for the rest of their lives.

The Police Force.

In addition to the army, India has a large civil police. Every town has its local watchmen, and every city is patrolled by police with clubs in their hands. The local village police aggregate something like 700,000 men, and this would be hardly enough to give one to each village. In addition there are thousands in the cities and on the whole order is fairly well kept. The thugs and other castes, who, in times past made a business of robbing, murdering and stealing, have been wiped out but there are still armed gangs who now and then go about committing robbery and house breaking.

The system of police work is excellent. The watchmen are under the eyes of the head men of their villages, and important crimes are reported